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VICTOR BABES UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND
PHARMACY, TIMISOARA, ROMANIA
17 – 20 October 2023

*Strengthening Capacities and Digital Competences in Biomedical Education
Through Internationalization at Home*





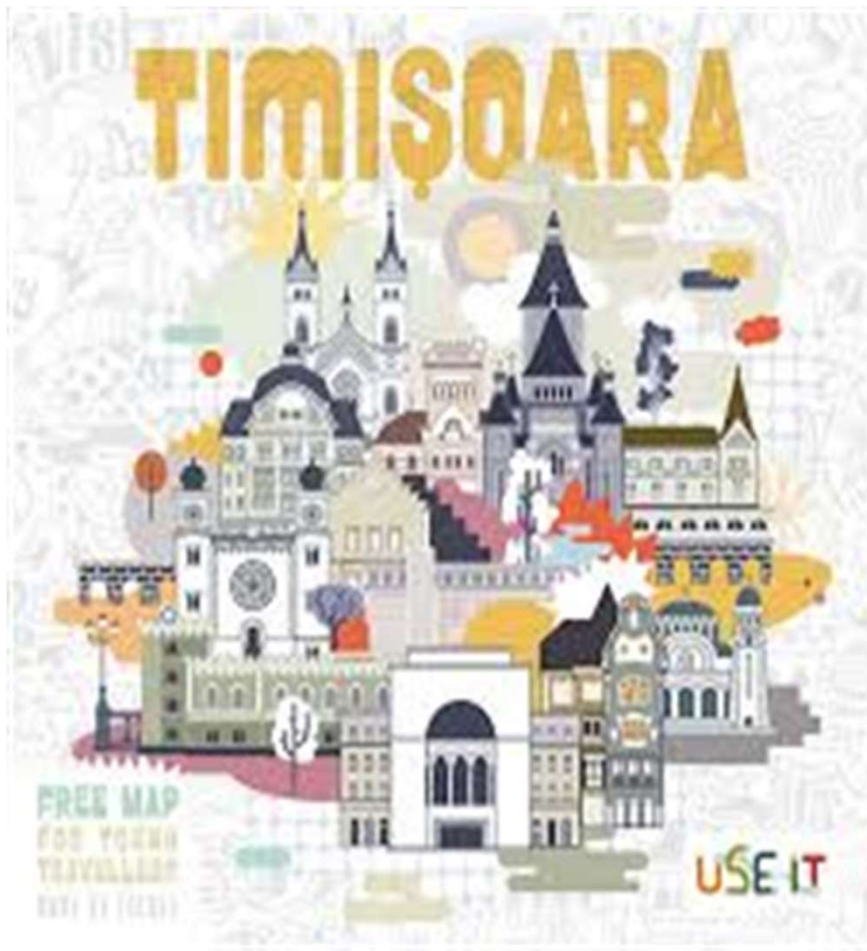
UNIVERSITATEA
DE MEDICINĂ ȘI FARMACIE
VICTOR BABEȘ | TIMIȘOARA

Victor Babes University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Timisoara 2023

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TIMISOARA - FIRSTS



- ▶ Timișoara was the first city in the Habsburg monarchy with street lighting (1760)
- ▶ The first European city to be lit by electric street lamps in 1884
- ▶ It opened the first public lending library in the Habsburg monarchy and built a municipal hospital 24 years before Vienna
- ▶ it published the first German newspaper in Southeast Europe
- ▶ The starting point of the 1989 anti-communist revolution

TIMISOARA – ethnic and cultural hub (1)

- ▶ Capital of the historical region of Banat, located in the West of the country
- ▶ 250,849 inhabitants with more than 400,000 inhabitants in the metropolitan area
- ▶ Multicultural city, home to 21 ethnicities and 18 religions
- ▶ Nicknamed the "Little Vienna" or the "City of Flowers", Timișoara is noted for its large number of historical monuments and its 36 parks and green spaces

TIMISOARA – ethnic and cultural hub (2)

Ethnic composition of Timișoara

- ▶ Romanian (81.4%)
- ▶ Hungarian (4.9%)
- ▶ Serbian (1.5%)
- ▶ German (Banat Swabians) (1.3%)
- ▶ Romani (0.7%)
- ▶ Bulgarian (0.3%)
- ▶ Ukrainian (0.2%)
- ▶ Slovak (0.1%)
- ▶ Italian (0.1%)
- ▶ Jew (0.1%)
- ▶ Other/Unknown (9.4%)

Religious composition of Timișoara

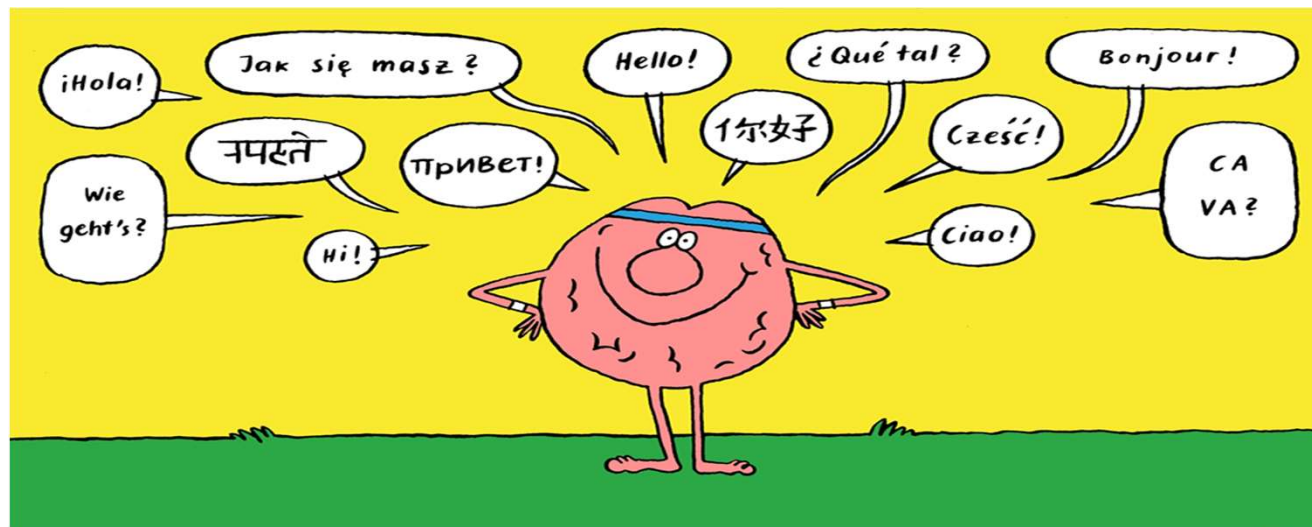
- ▶ Romanian Orthodox (75%)
- ▶ Roman Catholic (7.1%)
- ▶ Pentecostal (2%)
- ▶ Reformed (1.3%)
- ▶ Baptist (1.2%)
- ▶ Greek Catholic (1.1%)
- ▶ Serbian Orthodox (0.8%)
- ▶ Muslim (0.3%)
- ▶ Jehovah's Witnesses (0.1%)
- ▶ Plymouth Brethren (0.1%)
- ▶ Other/Unknown (11%)

TIMISOARA – ethnic and cultural hub (3)

- ▶ It has the greatest number of historical buildings in Romania, being part of the Art Nouveau European Route
- ▶ The city is currently the European Capital of Culture 2023
- ▶ As a technology hub, the city has one of the most powerful IT sectors in Romania and in 2013, Timișoara had the fastest internet download speed in the world

TIMISOARA – ethnic and cultural hub (4)

The multicultural character of Timisoara is also reflected by the fact that it offers the possibility of completing one's studies (from kindergarden to high-school) in another language, besides Romanian: Hungarian, German, Serbian, English, French, Italian, Spanish

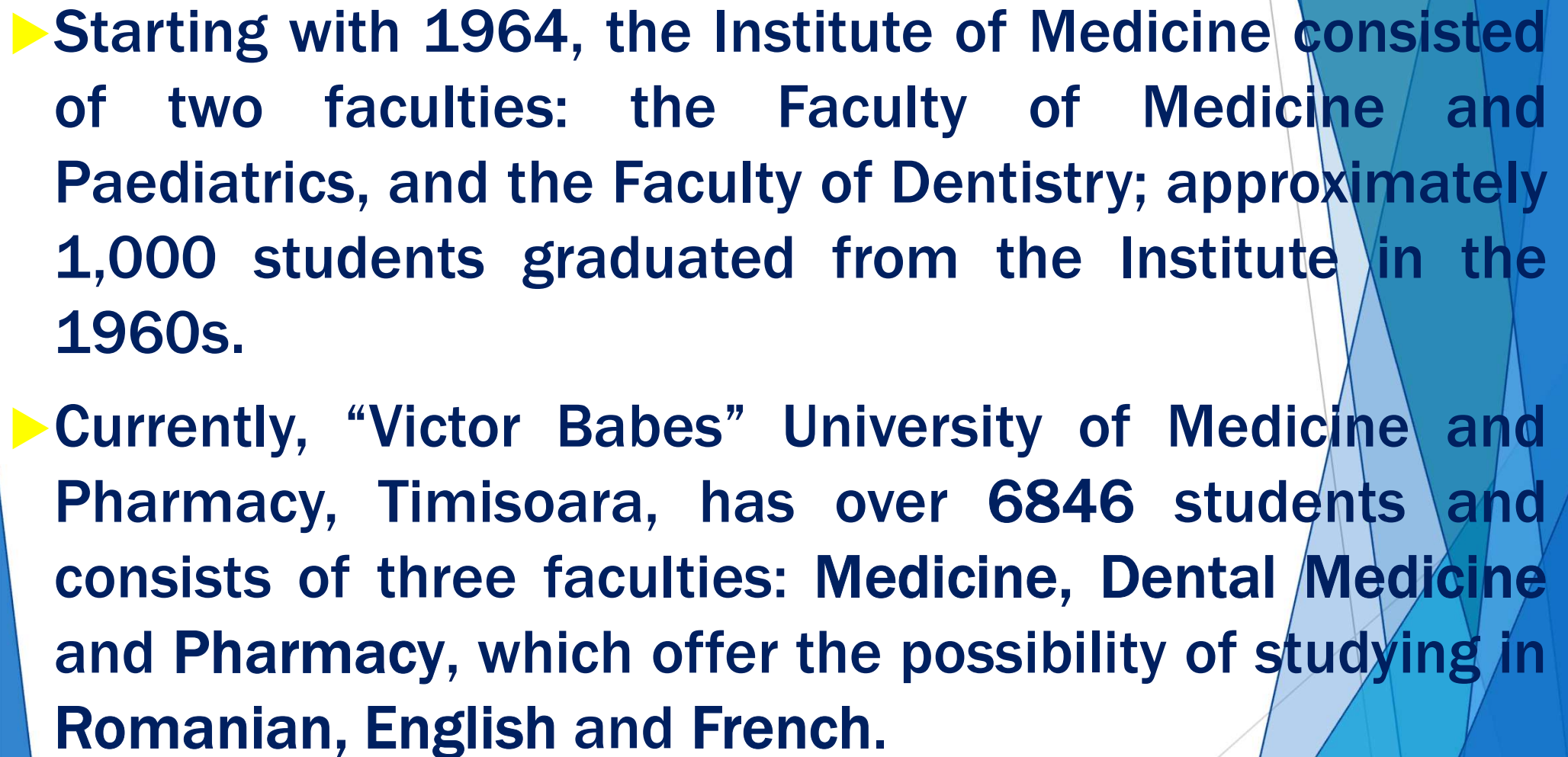


THE UNIVERSITY

The beginnings

The Faculty of Medicine, Timisoara, founded by Royal Decree, actually started its activity on 15th July 1945, with the first two years of study. There were 412 students enrolled in the first year, and 76 students enrolled in the second year.

In 1948, following the reform of the higher education, the Faculty of Medicine becomes the Institute of Medicine, with three faculties: Medicine, Paediatrics and Hygiene.

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- ▶ Starting with 1964, the Institute of Medicine consisted of two faculties: the Faculty of Medicine and Paediatrics, and the Faculty of Dentistry; approximately 1,000 students graduated from the Institute in the 1960s.
 - ▶ Currently, “Victor Babes” University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Timisoara, has over 6846 students and consists of three faculties: Medicine, Dental Medicine and Pharmacy, which offer the possibility of studying in Romanian, English and French.

FACULTIES AND SPECIALISATIONS

- ▶ **The main faculties (Medicine, Dental Medicine, Pharmacy) are located in Timisoara. Most of the theoretical lectures take place in the main buildings (Medicine I, Medicine II, the Faculty of Dental Medicine, the Faculty of Pharmacy).**
- ▶ **Clinical rotations take place in one of the various hospitals of Timisoara and, as we have a linear curriculum, alternate with theoretical lectures.**
- ▶ **Besides the main faculties located in Timisoara, the university also has two faculties of nursing, located in two nearby towns – Deva and Lugoj**

ACCOMMODATION



- ▶ The university has its own dorms which provide housing for 2500 students.
- ▶ The price for a place in the student dorms ranges between 130 lei and 445 lei, depending on the conditions offered
- ▶ Certain categories of students (orphans, students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, scholarship holders) benefit from free housing in our dorms.

QUALITY VS. QUANTITY

According to its size, our university cannot be considered a big institution, being rather a **medium-sized** one.

This is due to the fact that we have only **three faculties**, each with several sub-specialties, but all the three faculties address a specialized, targeted field, that of **MEDICAL or HEALTHCARE SCIENCES.**



INTERNATIONALISATION

**The Trends and the Strategy of
Victor Babes University of Medicine and Pharmacy,
Timisoara**

► The Strategy of VBUMPT (2018-2023)

STRONG POINTS (the results of implementing the international strategy for 2018/2023):

- increased numbers of international students from more than 50 countries based on our reputation, teaching quality and location
- out of 6846 students in all, 1489 are undergraduate international students and 278 international post-graduate students (residency)



- Our main focus lies on expanding international cooperation with researchers and academic staff from renowned universities and research centres, participating not only in the KA1 action, but also in the KA2 action (strategic partnerships)

Creating **SPECIFIC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS** for the recruitment of international students, both from EU and non-EU countries



- The admission of citizens of the EU, the EEA and the Swiss Confederation, on the one hand, and citizens of third countries, on the other hand, falls under the jurisdiction of two distinct departments within the Ministry of Education.
- Consequently, there are two types of admission for each category of citizens.

Citizens of the European Union, the EEA and the Swiss Confederation

- **EU citizens** have to sit for a FtF entrance exam which consists in 50 biology multiple choice questions out of a pool of 500 questions
- The entrance exam is organized in the same conditions as those for Romanian nationals
- Candidates are classified according to the average obtained in their multiple-choice tests
- The entrance exam is conditioned by the candidates' proficiency in the medium of instruction for which they have applied
- After the entrance exam, candidates need to obtain a certificate issued by the Romanian Ministry of Education, validating their baccalaureate/equivalent diplomas

Admission requirements for third countries

- **non-EU citizens are admitted based on a mathematical formula that takes into account:**
 - **the candidate's marks in chemistry and biology obtained at the baccalaureate exam**
 - **the candidate's final average at the baccalaureate exam**
- **The minimal requirements for access to higher education are established by the Romanian Ministry of Education**

- ▶ Once admitted, candidates from third countries need a Letter of Acceptance to Studies issued by the Romanian Ministry of Education
- ▶ The Letter of Acceptance to Studies is mandatory for obtaining a student visa



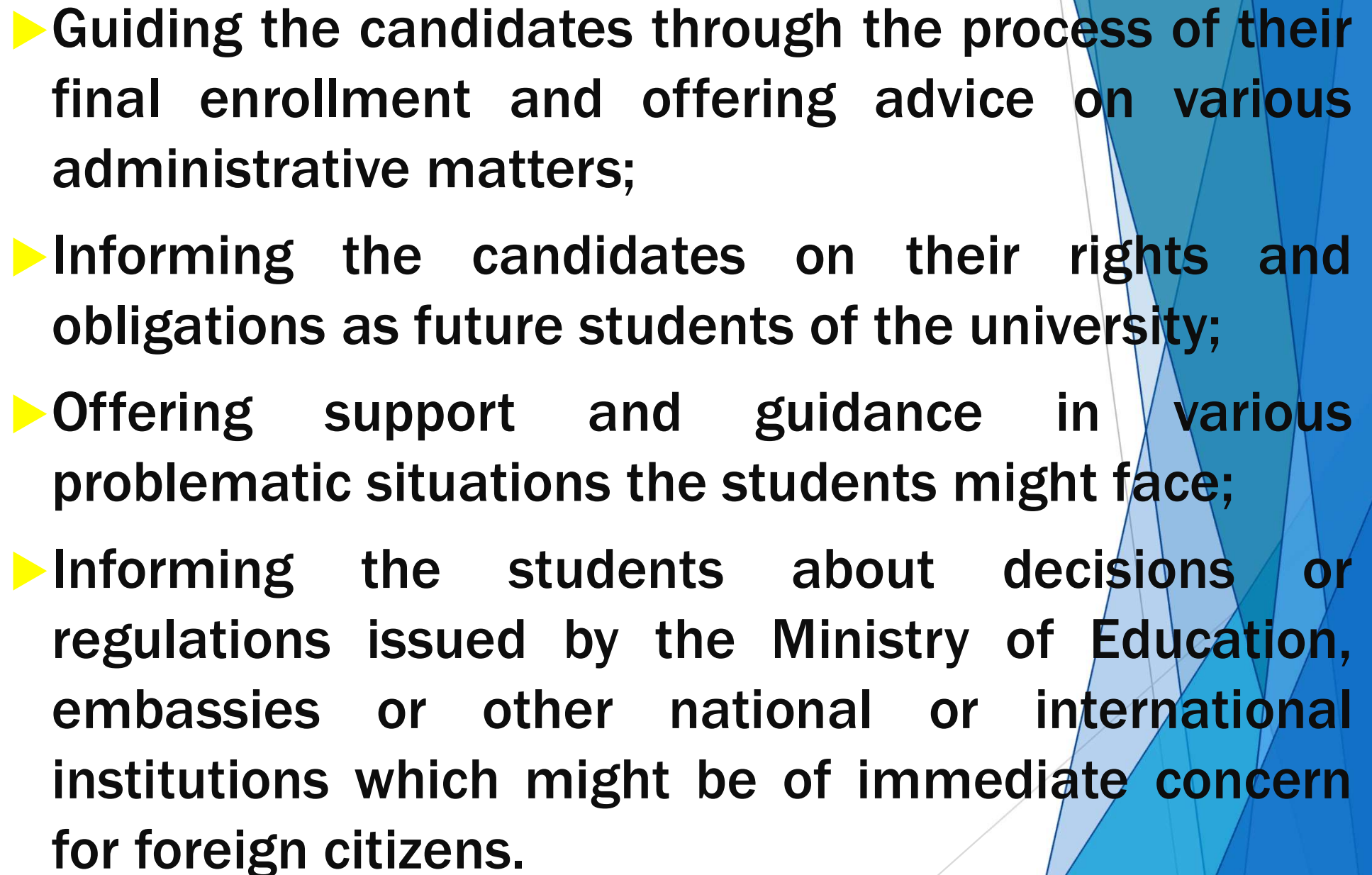
- ▶ Candidates from third countries who do not have an international language certificate may take their language test in our language department before enrollment

THE INTERNATIONAL Vice-Rectorate

Apart from the institutional strategy, the International Vice-Rectorate has its own strategy and mission which focus mainly on attracting international students enrolled in full-term studies conducted in Romanian, English or French.

The International Students Office offers all the necessary information regarding the admission requirements, as well as logistical support. This information is conveyed through various media and encompasses a wide range of activities:

- ▶ Posting on our website comprehensive information about the pre-registration and registration procedures, in Romanian, English and French;
- ▶ Posting on our website all the downloadable documents for the pre-registration procedure;
- ▶ Managing the online admission platform;
- ▶ Offering information and counselling by phone or e-mail and maintaining a permanent contact with the potential candidates;

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- ▶ **Guiding the candidates through the process of their final enrollment and offering advice on various administrative matters;**
 - ▶ **Informing the candidates on their rights and obligations as future students of the university;**
 - ▶ **Offering support and guidance in various problematic situations the students might face;**
 - ▶ **Informing the students about decisions or regulations issued by the Ministry of Education, embassies or other national or international institutions which might be of immediate concern for foreign citizens.**

DIRECTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

The International Vice-Rectorate contains seven Directions of Development, assigned to different aspects of internationalization or geographical areas

- ▶ Direction of Development for Europe**
- ▶ Direction of Development for Central Asia**
- ▶ Direction of Development for Israel and Asia Minor**
- ▶ Direction of Development for the ex-Soviet Republics**
- ▶ Direction of Development for MAGREB countries and alumni**
- ▶ Direction of Development for the diaspora and Romanians everywhere**
- ▶ Direction of Development for the Erasmus+ programme**

INTERNATIONALISATION AT HOME

MAIN OBJECTIVES

- ▶ **International experiences for all students** – continually increasing the number of outbound students by stimulating physical mobility (facilitating automatic and full recognition, offering students financial support)
- ▶ **International experiences for teaching and administrative staff** concretized in participation in international scientific events for the teaching staff and researchers and participation in Erasmus staff weeks for teaching and administrative staff. The introduction of blended and virtual mobility has led to a significant increase in this type of mobility.

- **Integration and mutual understanding by celebrating the diversity of the university community.** A specific group of students to consider in the context of Internationalisation at Home are **international students** who currently make up approximately 25% of the overall student population of our university. This component is particularly true in relation to the integration of international students and helping them to establish a close rapport with the local community and feel welcomed, supported and included. A special role here is played by the **International Students' Counselling Office** headed by one of our former international students (currently a tenured lecturer of our university).

- Equal chances for everyone - Starting from our international admission process to the Erasmus mobility programme, our strategy is based on equity and equality, non-discrimination, transparency. All our students have the same rights and obligations regardless their nationality, gender religion or political views.

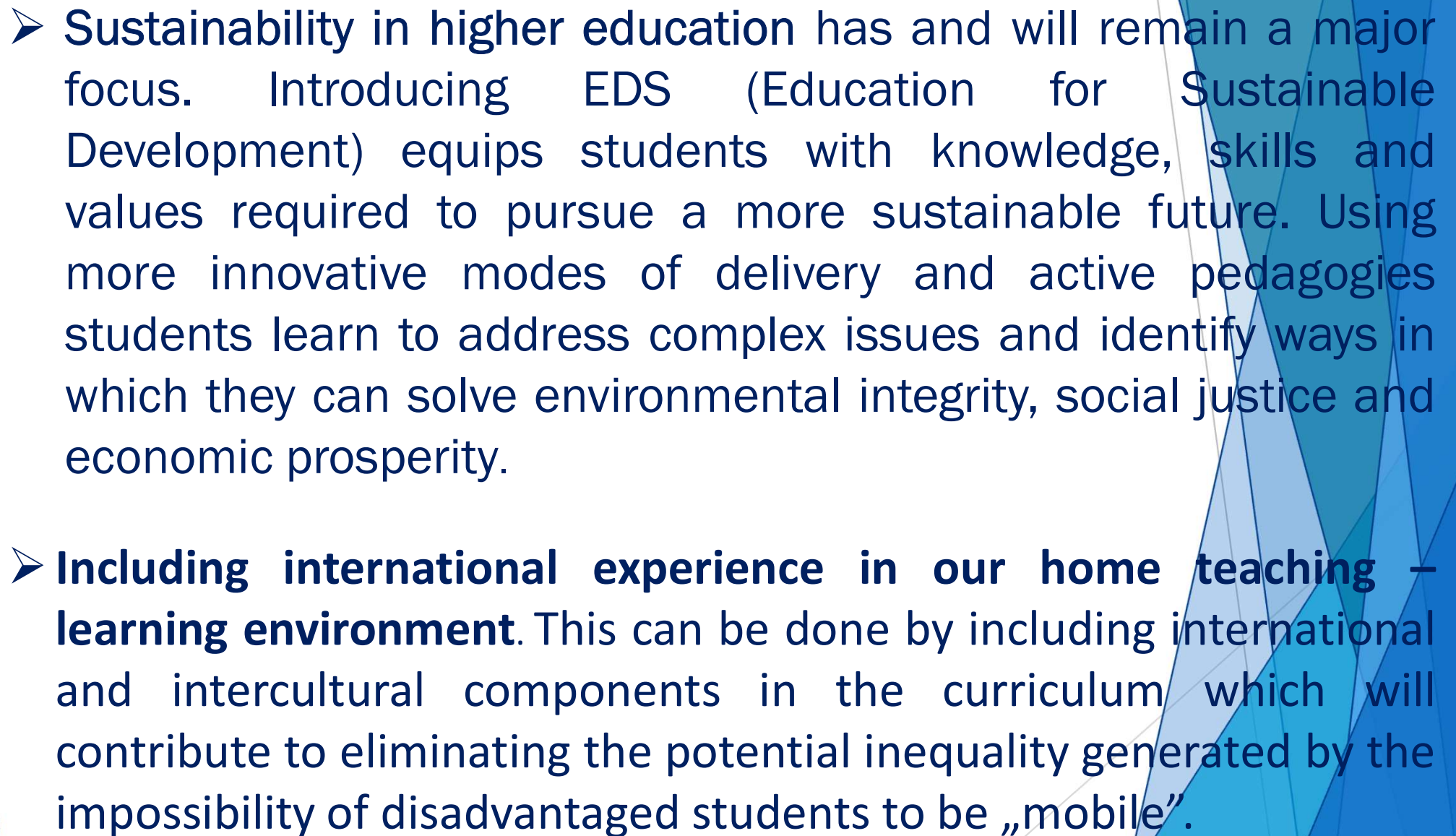


➤ **Helping students acquire and develop international skills they will rely on in their future career by promoting:**

- communication and decision-making
- teamwork
- active listening
- intercultural awareness and competence
- time management
- decision-making
- foreign languages



SKILLS CHANGE LIVES

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- Sustainability in higher education has and will remain a major focus. Introducing EDS (Education for Sustainable Development) equips students with knowledge, skills and values required to pursue a more sustainable future. Using more innovative modes of delivery and active pedagogies students learn to address complex issues and identify ways in which they can solve environmental integrity, social justice and economic prosperity.
 - **Including international experience in our home teaching – learning environment.** This can be done by including international and intercultural components in the curriculum which will contribute to eliminating the potential inequality generated by the impossibility of disadvantaged students to be „mobile”.

Digitalization and digital transformation

- The entire application and registration process has been digitalized. All applications and necessary documents are submitted via an **e-platform**.
- We started implementing EWP by creating our own **online platform** for managing mobility programmes besides using the already existing platforms of the European Commission
- **The Moodle platform** is a modern e - learning and communication tool available to both students and teaching staff

RESULTS OF OUR INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Currently VBUMPT has 3 faculties and 12 specialties:

Faculty of Medicine

- ▶ **Medicine/RO 6 years**
- ▶ **Medicine/English 6 years**
- ▶ **Medicine/French 6 years**
- ▶ **Nursing/RO 4 years**
- ▶ **Physical medicine and kinetotherapy/RO 3 years**
- ▶ **Nutrition and dietetics/RO 3 years**

Faculty of Dental Medicine :

- ▶ **Dental Medicine/RO 6 years**
- ▶ **Dental Medicine/English 6 years**
- ▶ **Dental technicians/RO 3 years**
- ▶ **Dental prophylaxis/RO 3 years**

Faculty of Pharmacy :

- ▶ **Pharmacy/RO 5 years**
- ▶ **Pharmacy/French 5 years**
- ▶ **Starting with the academic year 2024 – 2025, the Faculty of Pharmacy will open its English language section**

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Out of a total number of **6846** students, **1489**
are **international students**
50 countries



MEDICINE – ROMANIAN/ENGLISH/FRENCH:

The English language programme started in 1997/1998 with 50 students;

Currently, the faculty of medicine has 1056 undergraduate international students enrolled as follows:

658 in the English section,

212 in the French section

186 in the Romanian section



PHARMACY – ROMANIAN/FRENCH



The French language programme started in
1997/1998 with **13** students;

In 2022/2023 it has **179** international students:

144 in the French section

35 in the Romanian section



DENTAL MEDICINE – ROMANIAN/ENGLISH

**The English language programme started in
2012/2013 with 30 students;**

In 2022/2023 it has 254 international students:

205 in the English section

49 in the Romanian section

In the academic year 2022/2023 our university has a total of:

- **1489** undergraduate international students from **50** countries
- **276** international students enrolled in post-graduate studies of specialisation (residency) from **32** countries
 - **4** international master students from **1** country
 - **13** international Phd students from **10** countries

THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

- Although the number of students participating in the ERASMUS+ mobility programme is comparatively small due to the highly specialised field of our university, the changes in our international strategy have determined an increase in most of these numbers, as well.
- Our university has rather severe selection criteria for the outgoing Erasmus students, i.e. their academic performance (average >80%), language proficiency (minimum B2)



OUTBOUND STUDENTS

2020/2021: 47

2021/2022: 42

2022/2023: 47

INBOUND STUDENTS

26

37

38

In 2022-2023 our university participated in a BIP for the first time, therefore the total number of incoming students reached 64

DIFFICULTIES IN INCREASING THE NUMBER OF ERASMUS MOBILITY PARTICIPANTS

- 1. The major difficulty comes from the incompatibility of the medical curricula between various European Higher Education Institutions.**
- 2. Romanian universities function on the basis of a linear curriculum, while most European universities have a modular curriculum.**
- 3. The medium-term strategy of the university is also based on curricular reform, which has already been initiated.**

NOT JUST A MEDICAL SCHOOL

Research

The development of scientific medical and pharmaceutical research is one of the way by which Victor Babes University of Medicine and Pharmacy aims at accomplishing its mission, as it is defined by the University Charter: to become a landmark in education, science and culture.



The strategy of scientific research mainly focuses on the following objectives:

- ▶ To consolidate and develop managerial skills in academic scientific research, mainly in identifying and attracting internal and external financing resources;**
- ▶ To develop highly-skilled human resources in European primary medical fields, as well as research infrastructure;**
- ▶ To promote excellence in research and bring it up to current standards;**
- ▶ To increase international visibility for academic scientific research.**

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- ▶ The university is involved in 3 national and 5 international research projects
 - ▶ Starting with 2018, we have participated every year in the project *Institutional Development Fund (FDI)* funded by the Romanian Ministry of Education
 - ▶ Our international activity was concretized in April 2023 when, together with our partner universities which form the Timisoara University Alliance, we organized the *SmartDiaspora* Conference, under the high patronage of the President of Romania

STUDENT-CENTERED UNIVERSITY

- ▶ Besides the specific teaching activities, the Language Department of the university organizes various cultural activities: *Creative Writing Workshop, Drum the Drama – theater workshop, LiteraTURA – meetings with writers, Live@the Museum – cultural mediation*
- ▶ We have a vast library, multimedia library, virtual library, e-learning platform (Moodle)
- ▶ The university has its own printing house
- ▶ The high number of international students and their ethnic and cultural diversity lead to the creation of the *International Student Counselor Office*, led by one of our academic who was a former international student

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

- EU-accredited diplomas
- Visiting and associate professors from worldwide
- Students from all over the world
- Graduates practising medicine all over the world

International accreditation

- WFME (World Federation of Medical Education)
- IAAR (Independent Agency for Accreditation and Rating)
- EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register)
- ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education)

GRADUATION DAY 2023



GRADUATION DAY 2023



Graduation Day, Faculty of Dental Medicine, English section - 2023



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